



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/731,445	12/10/2003	Hye Yong Park	K-0589	5122
34610	7590	05/24/2006	EXAMINER	
FLESHNER & KIM, LLP P.O. BOX 221200 CHANTILLY, VA 20153			HANSEN, JAMES ORVILLE	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3637	

DATE MAILED: 05/24/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/731,445

Applicant(s)

PARK ET AL.

Examiner

James O. Hansen

Art Unit

3637

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 March 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 20 March 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings were received on March 20, 2006. These drawings are approved for examination purposes by the examiner.

Claim Objections

2. Claims 15 & 17 are objected to because of the following informalities: In Claims 15 & 17 respectively, the recitation "of the boss" should be changed to --of the at least one boss-- so as to remain consistent with the previously claimed limitation.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Adachi et al., [U.S. Patent No. 5,699,132]. Adachi (figures 1-15) teaches of a cabinet for a home appliance, the cabinet (fig. 1) comprising: an outer panel (10) including at least one reinforcement rib (13 or more specifically 13c) integrally formed on an inner surface of the outer panel and extending from the inner surface of the outer panel to a predetermined length (note fig. 1 for example); and an inner panel (30) including at least one boss (33) provided on an inner surface of the inner panel in a position corresponding to the at least one rib, wherein the boss is configured to engage the rib so as to couple the inner and outer panels (fig. 7), wherein the boss has a

Art Unit: 3637

substantially planar surface (viewed as the planar distal end surface – annular) positioned at a substantially right angle with respect to the rib (fig. 7) as readily apparent to the examiner. As to claims 2 & 3, the inner and outer panels are capable of being joined via welding or a weld process. It is noted that the method of forming the device [welding] is not germane to the issue of patentability of the device itself. Therefore, this limitation has not been given patentable weight. As to claim 4, the rib has a substantially planar end surface (viewed as the planar distal end or tip – fig. 7) that is substantially parallel to the planar surface of the boss. As to claim 5, the boss has at least one coupling groove (33a) formed in the planar surface in a position that corresponds to the rib. As to claim 6, the coupling groove is configured to receive the rib (fig. 7).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's prior art admission of figure 3 and corresponding disclosure as described in the specification [known hereafter as APAA] in view of Adachi et al. APAA (figure 3) teaches of a cabinet for a home appliance, the cabinet (generally shown in figs. 1-2) comprising: an outer panel (20) including fitting grooves (20a) formed integrally in the outer panel; and an inner panel (22) including reinforcement ribs (22a) integrally formed on an inner surface of the inner panel and extending from the inner surface of

Art Unit: 3637

the inner panel to a predetermined length (note fig. 3 for example). The ribs having a substantially planar distal end surface that are substantially parallel to a planar surface of a respective groove, wherein the ribs are configured to be received in a respective groove. APAA teaches applicant's claimed inventive structure as disclosed above; but does not show the ribs as being integrally formed on the outer panel [APAA shows the ribs formed on the inner panel] or show a "boss" provided on the inner panel for receiving the ribs. As to the placement of the elements, the position is taken that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to vary the positioning of the mating elements, since it has been held that a mere reversal of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. As to the incorporation of a "boss", Adachi is cited as an evidence reference to show that providing a "boss" (33) on a panel structure, for the purpose of mating with a "rib" structure (13), is old and well known. Accordingly, the position is taken that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the structure of APAA so as to incorporate a boss as taught by Adachi because this arrangement would provide additional structural strength (col. 4) between the coupled members thereby enhancing the longevity of the product. As to claims 2 & 3, the inner and outer panels are capable of being joined via welding or a weld process. It is noted that the method of forming the device [welding] is not germane to the issue of patentability of the device itself. Therefore, this limitation has not been given patentable weight.

7. Claims 12-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over APAA and Adachi et al., and further in view of Jung et al., [U.S. Patent No. 5,857,363]. The prior art teaches applicant's inventive claimed structure as disclosed above, but

Art Unit: 3637

does not show the cabinet as having a “sectioned lid” with a first section hinged to a second section. The examiner has taken the position that Figure 3 of the instant application clearly defines prior art while Figures 1-2 may constitute a generalized portion of the instant invention. Jung (figures 1-6) is cited as an evidence reference to show the known use of a “sectioned lid” (20) with a cabinet (10) of a home appliance. The lid including a first section (21) hinge-coupled to a second section (22) as at (23). As such, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the structure of the prior art so as to utilize a sectioned lid as taught by Jung because this arrangement provides a lid that minimizes the space requirement [height-wise] needed to accommodate the appliance within compact spaces since the full length of the lid is not extended vertically in order to access contents within the cabinet [only half the lid’s height is required].

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant’s arguments, filed March 20, 2006, with respect to the rejection of the claims have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made as presented above.

Conclusion

9. Applicant’s amendments to the claims necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James O. Hansen whose telephone number is 571-272-6866. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday between 8-4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on 571-272-6867. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3637

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

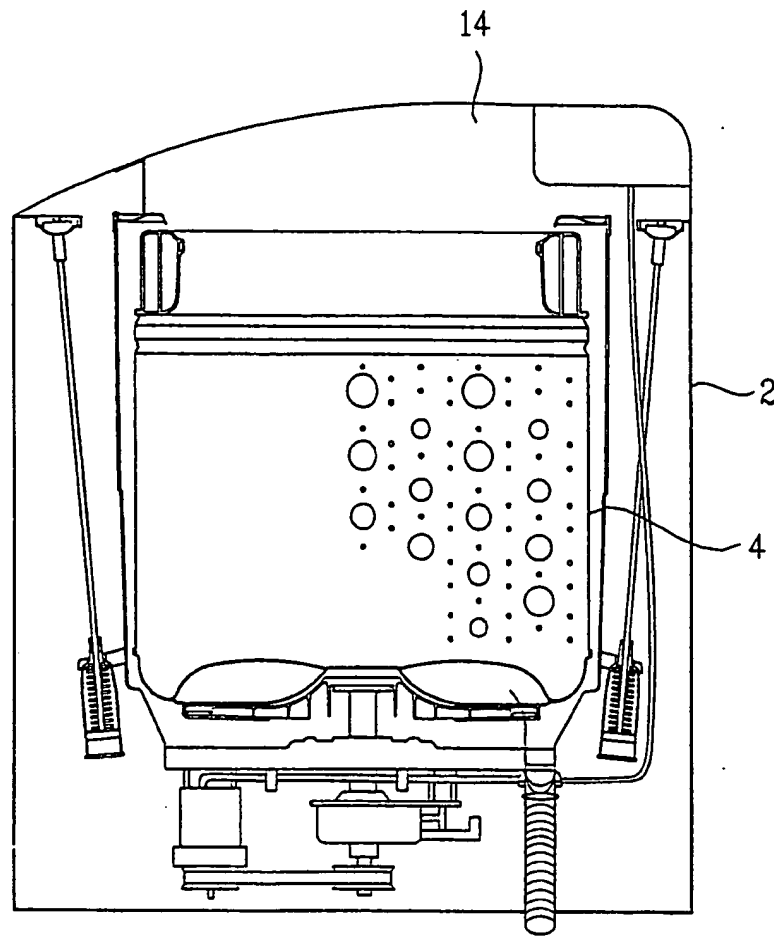


James O. Hansen
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3637

JOH
May 22, 2006

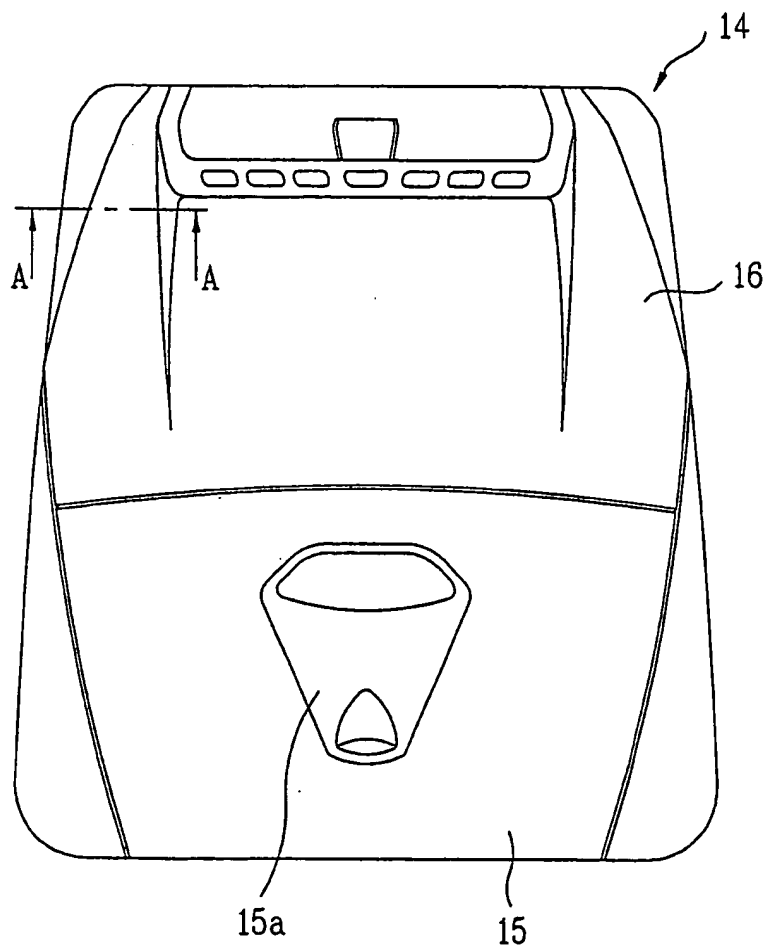


FIG. 1



Approved for examination purposes
Jph 5/19/06

FIG. 2



Approved for examination purposes
Apr 5/14/06